

Early Intervention and Prevention – Parenting Workstream

The Parenting workstream, within the NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Psychology Directorate, aims to increase the availability of training in, and support the effective selection and implementation of evidence-based early intervention and prevention interventions for improving the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families from the antenatal period through to 18 years.

The focus of this workstream is on 4 integrated strands of work; Infant Mental Health (IMH), the Psychology of Parenting Programme (PoPP), Connecting with Parent’s Motivations (CWPM) and the Early Intervention Framework for Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing (The Early Intervention Framework). Together, these programmes of work support the social, emotional and behavioural development of infants, children, young people and their families, both for those children and families where there are early concerns, as well as at a more universal level. All of these offers are underpinned by the latest research and practice within the field of Implementation Science, to ensure that this work maximises reach and impact, in a sustainable way. Outcome data is collected from families completing a PoPP supported group. As of September 2023 almost 7,500 parents have enrolled in a group. Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ) are completed pre and post group and outcome data are available for 4,000 children. This data shows that 58% of children starting in the high-risk range of the SDQ had showed substantial improvements and have moved out of this range by the end of the group.

Infant Mental Health

It is widely recognised that one of the most important factors for infant and child development is the relationships that they experience with those around them. The impact of early relationships is



profound for development across the years to follow, and as children grow and their worlds widen beyond their family. The primary source of interaction for infants and young children is their parents or caregivers and the relationship that they develop will form a blueprint for relationships to follow. Sensitive, attuned, consistent and loving interactions with their parent or caregiver is known to be a protective factor for a number of later life outcomes across mental health, physical health and social domains.

Since 2014, NES have been providing practitioners with basic Infant Mental Health (IMH) training, through a cascade of the Solihull Approach, a series of standardised trainings designed to help practitioners think psychologically about development in the earliest years of life and to integrate an understanding of infant mental health into their everyday

practice. The Solihull Approach brings together three core psychological constructs of containment, reciprocity and behaviour management with the aim of helping parents understand their child's behaviour in the context of their development and the parent-child relationship. It focuses on developing nurturing and supportive relationships between children and their carer by promoting reflective, sensitive, and effective parenting.

Solihull Approach Training

Over the years the parenting
workstream has trained:

353 trainers

Who have cascaded the training to:

2,369 practitioners

Who accesses training?

- Staff across specialist infant mental health workforce
- Health visitors
- Early years practitioners
- School nurses
- Social care staff
- Third sector staff
- Perinatal mental health staff

In May 2020, in response to the impact that Covid-19 was having on families' ability to participate in face-to-face parenting support, the Scottish Government supported NES to provide access for all families in Scotland to **Solihull Approach Online**, as an additional universal support for parents and young people at this time. Although previously utilised by NES as a basic IMH training offer, the Solihull Approach is relevant for all families from the antenatal period through to young adults aged 19 years. **Almost 18,000** people have registered to undertake one of the courses included in Solihull Approach Online offer:

1. Understanding your pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby
2. Understanding your baby
- 3a. Understanding your child
- 3b. Understanding your child with additional needs
4. Understanding your teenager's brain
5. Understanding your brain – for teenagers only!
6. Understanding your child's feelings – a taster course
7. Understanding your child's mental health and wellbeing – accompanies 3a or 3b
8. Understanding your relationships

Building on the success of the Solihull Approach cascade, the publication of the NES Perinatal Mental Health Curriculum Framework and the establishment of the Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Programme Board, NES have launched an Infant Mental Health Training Scheme, across the four levels of practice; informed, skilled, enhanced, specialist, with the aim of expanding the infant mental health training opportunities available to the

multi-sector early years workforce. This offer has included the delivery of the **Warwick University Infant Mental Health Online** training course, as well as providing training in evidence-based parent-infant relationship-based interventions, including **Video Interaction Guidance** and **Circle of Security Parenting**. Plans to deliver training in further evidence-based parent infant relationship interventions for the enhanced and specialist workforce are underway.

Advanced Infant Mental Health Training

Warwick University Infant Mental Health Online training:

376 practitioners

Mellow Parenting:

6 practitioners

Video Interaction Guidance:

81 practitioners

Who accesses training?

- Staff across specialist infant mental health workforce
- Perinatal mental health staff
- Staff working in enhanced or specialised roles supporting infant or perinatal mental health.



Psychology of Parenting Programme

Children, who at a young age start to display difficulties in their regulation of emotions, social skills and behaviour are at higher risk of developing poorer outcomes in the future. The Centre for Mental Health's report "Building a better future" (2014) highlighted these risks. They found that young children displaying severe and persistent behaviour difficulties are at higher risk of going on to:

- Leave school with no qualifications
- Develop future mental health difficulties, such as depression, anxiety and addiction difficulties
- Be on the child protection register
- Have contact with the criminal justice system
- Become a teenage parent

These risk factors highlight the importance of early intervention for families where there are significant and persistence challenges with their child's emotional, social and behavioural development.

The Psychology of Parenting Programme (PoPP) works collaboratively with Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) across Scotland with the aim of improving the availability of evidence-based parent-child relationship focused interventions. The project is funded through the Mental Health Directorate at the Scottish Government.

Through PoPP, CPPs receive implementation support and training to enable them to make available high-quality evidence-based parenting interventions (namely the Incredible Years preschool and Level 4 Group Triple P). The groups are aimed at families with a child between the ages of 3 and 6 years old where the child is displaying concerning levels of difficulties. The groups aim to build a strong parent-child relationship, empower families and support them to promote resilience in their children. By reducing the child's challenging behaviours and improving the parent-child relationship it is possible to reduce the risk of children's difficulties escalating, reducing their risk of future mental health difficulties and improving the child's current and future wellbeing.

Who accesses PoPP training?

Practitioners are from health, education, social care and local authority, for example:

- Early Years Practitioners
- Family Support Workers
- Family Link Workers
- Health Visitor Assistants
- School Nurse Support Assistants
- Community Nursery Nurses

PoPP Trainings

Incredible Years Preschool:

633 practitioners

Level 4 Group Triple P:

419 practitioners

Group Teen Triple P:

45 practitioners

Psychology of Parenting Group Outcomes since 2013

Number of Groups Delivered (or currently being delivered)	1,124
Number of families enrolled in groups	7,386
Number of children for whom pre and post group SDQs have been gathered	3,979
% of children in the clinical range at the start of groups how had moved out of this high risk range when their parents finished attending a group	60%

The Psychology of Parenting Programme (PoPP) has now expanded its offers of evidence-based supports for children, young people and families. These extended offers are intended to expand the age range that current PoPP supported interventions target. PoPP is now supporting sites to train practitioners in, and deliver groups targeting families of school age children (7-12 year olds) where there are concerns. These groups are The Incredible Years® School Age Basic Programme and Level 4 Group Triple P. PoPP has also extended its offers to include a more universal intervention, group-based intervention for parents of typically developing adolescents, Group Teen Triple P.

In addition to these groups for parents, since the Covid-19 pandemic PoPP has supported PoPP sites to be able to offer Triple P Online for families. This is a self-directed online intervention for parents, aimed at supporting parents to understand their child's behaviour, strengthen relationships and build their child's social emotional and behavioural skills. To date 215 families have enrolled in the Triple P Online intervention.

Connecting with Parents' Motivations

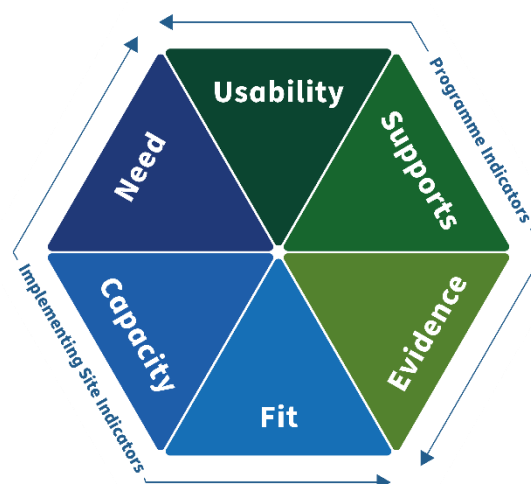


Connecting with Parents' Motivations (CwPM) is a strength-based communication skills training system developed within NES that is designed to enhance the abilities of the wider children and families workforce, so that they can have more of the kinds of conversations with parents that are likely to facilitate parent uptake of support. The CwPM manualised training programme is geared towards the promotion of non-judgemental, empowering partnerships between practitioners and parents. The training encourages greater use of specific strength-based communication skills that have been scientifically demonstrated to increase engagement in other therapeutic contexts.

NES offers cascade training to staff who wish to deliver CwPM trainings locally to the wider children's services workforce, with the aim of increasing staff skills in engaging families into evidence-based parent-child relationship interventions. As of September 2023, over 150 cascades of the training had been delivered across Scotland reaching over 2,310 workers. Furthermore, almost 250 practitioners have been trained as trainers in CwPM.

Early Intervention Framework for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing

NES developed the Early Intervention Framework (EI Framework), in response to Action 3 of the Mental Health Strategy (2017-2027). The EI Framework aims to increase the effective implementation of evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes and approaches to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. It has been designed to support services to make fully informed decisions about what interventions might be implementable and sustainable for their specific context.



The EI Framework includes:

- A searchable database of evidence-based mental health and wellbeing interventions for children and young people (from the antenatal period- 18 years)
- Comprehensive information for each intervention included in the database across six key dimensions of implementation
- Guided questioning to support critical thinking and decision making regarding selecting and implementing interventions
- A self-assessment tool to enable consideration and evaluation of unique local implementation contexts
- A rating system for the six implementation dimensions with prepopulated scores for Programme Indicators (Usability, Supports, Evidence) and the ability for the user to self-rate the Implementing Site Indicators (Fit, Capacity, Need) based on their local context
- A tool to allow comparison of the ratings of each of the six dimensions of implementation across different programmes
- Tools and materials to support selection and implementation of an intervention